



THE NEW SUNDAY EXPRESS

BENGALURU • SUNDAY • MARCH 24, 2024 • ₹12.00 • PAGES 24 • LATE CITY EDITION



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CBI RAIDS MULTIPLE PREMISES OF MOITRA IN CASH-FOR-QUERY SCAM

The CBI conducted searches at various premises linked to Mahua Moitra, including her parents' home in Kolkata, in the cash-for-query case

TRINAMOL CALLS THE RAID VENDETTA POLITICS

The CBI sleuths reached the Trinamool Congress leader's home in Kolkata and other cities early in the morning and went to her party office in Krishnanagar in the evening. The TMC repeated her for the Lok Sabha poll from Krishnanagar. The party dubbed the raids as vendetta politics and a desperate attempt by the BJP to misuse central agencies ahead of the polls

CBI TO FILE REPORT WITHIN SIX MONTHS

An FIR was filed this week against Moitra on the directions of Lokpal, which has asked the CBI to file its report within six months. Moitra has challenged her expulsion from Lok Sabha in the SC. She was expelled in December 2023 following the recommendation of Ethics Committee for sharing her login, password of NIC portal

1st TIME

MAHUA MOITRA BECAME A LOK SABHA MP IN 2019



Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann at an AAP protest condemning the arrest of his Delhi counterpart Arvind Kejriwal, in New Delhi on Saturday | P1

HC rejects urgent hearing. Holi-day for Kejri with ED

Comment by German foreign office on full legal access to the Delhi CM angers MEA

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY AND YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

DELHI Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday suffered a fresh setback after the Delhi High Court rejected his appeal for urgent listing and hearing against his remand in the liquor scam case. He was remanded in the Enforcement Directorate's custody till Thursday by a local court on Friday. The legal team of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convenor Kejriwal mentioned the matter before Justice Manmohan, Acting Chief Justice. The judge heard it though it was the court's off day, but refused to list it for urgent hearing. Since the Delhi High Court will be closed for two days on Monday and Tuesday due to the Holi festival, the earliest Kejriwal's plea can be listed for hearing is Wednesday. The ED had alleged on Friday that Kejriwal generated over ₹100 crore in kickbacks in

the liquor policy scam. Of the proceeds of the crimes, ₹45 crore was used in the Goa polls.

In a related development, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) bristled at a comment on Kejriwal by a spokesperson of Germany's foreign office.

"Kejriwal is entitled to fair and impartial trial. This includes that he makes use of all available legal avenues without restriction. The presumption of innocence is a central element of the rule of law and must apply to him," the spokesperson said.

The MEA reacted rather sharply by summoning German envoy Georg Enzweiler and voicing its disapproval. "The German Deputy Chief of Mission in New Delhi was summoned and we conveyed India's strong protest on their foreign office spokesperson's comments on our internal affairs. We see it as undermining the independence of our judiciary," said MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal.



'WILL COME OUT SOON'

"I will soon come out... Whether inside or outside, every moment of my life is dedicated to serving the country," Kejriwal was quoted as saying by his wife Sunita in a video

foreign office spokesperson's comments on our internal affairs. We see it as undermining the independence of our judiciary," said MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal.

143 killed and counting in Moscow terror attack by IS group's Afghanistan branch

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

At least 143 people were killed in a terrorist attack on a packed concert hall in western Moscow, Russian authorities said on Saturday. The Islamic State's Afghanistan branch later claimed responsibility for the attack.

Gunmen burst into Crocus City Hall in Moscow's suburb of Krasnogorsk on Friday and randomly opened fire on people who had arrived to watch a concert by Russian band Ploidy that was about to start.

The attackers also set off a blaze that took firefighters hours to bring under control.

Authorities said the toll could rise as investigators were combing through the charred wreck-



Rescuers clear charred wreckage inside Moscow's Crocus City Hall on Saturday | A1

age of the hall for more victims. Over 100 people have been injured and the condition of 44 of them is said to be serious.

The Russian interior ministry said all four suspected gunmen

Putin rejected warnings about attack, says US

The US Embassy in Moscow said it had warned Russia on March 7 that extremists were planning to target large gatherings in the city. But Russian President Vladimir Putin had called it a "provocative" statement and "outright blackmail... to intimidate and destabilise our society by scaring Russian citizens"



were foreign nationals. Sources with links to the security services said they were from Tajikistan.

One of the detained suspects reportedly told Russian investi-

gators he was recruited through Telegram and offered 5,00,000 rubles (₹4.5 lakh) for his role.

In his statement on Saturday, Russian President Vladimir Putin said 11 people have been detained. He also sought to link the attack to Ukraine, saying they were trying to escape to Ukraine through a 'window' prepared for them on the Ukrainian side of the border. But Ukraine denied any role in the carnage.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi joined others in condemning the attack. "We strongly condemned the heinous terrorist attack... India stands in solidarity with the government and the people of the Russian Federation in this hour of grief," he posted on X.

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Karnataka moves SC for ₹18,171 cr drought grant from Centre

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE Karnataka government on Saturday approached the Supreme Court, seeking its direction to the Centre to release Rs 18,171 crore due to the state to tackle drought.

"After exhausting all our options, we exercised our statu-

tory right under Article 32 with a writ petition. The Centre even violated the Disaster Management Act 2005. The petition is likely to be listed for hearing after a week as the court is on vacation," Chief Minister Siddaramaiah told reporters here.

Siddaramaiah said that his government approached the

SC with a 'prayer' to direct the Centre to immediately release funds to tackle drought. On moving the top court after the announcement of elections to the Lok Sabha, he said, "Seeking justice cannot be an election issue."

He claimed that the state gov-

ernment had initiated steps to tackle drought by distributing Rs 2,000 each to 33,44,000 farmers by releasing Rs 650 crore from its treasury.

"We have declared 223 taluks drought-hit. Crops grown on 48 lakh hectares of land have been damaged. We submitted three memoran-

dums to the Centre. But the state has not received a single paisa from the Centre," he said.

In October last, a central team visited the state and according to the rule, a decision should be taken to provide funds to tackle drought within a month of the team submitting its report, he said.

North-South divide in cybercrime: Fraudsters target each other's zones

RISHITA KHANNA @ Bengaluru

CYBERCRIME investigators, who have cracked multiple mule accounts, have observed a clear pattern of north-south divide in India: cyber fraudsters in the north target victims in the south, while those in the south target victims in the north.

A police officer who is part of investigations into mule accounts (accounts used to receive and transfer funds acquired illegally on behalf of others) in Karnataka said all those accounts that were cracked were linked to villages in the north. The officer explained that this calculated move allowed fraudsters to act swiftly so that by the time a complaint was filed and police initiated action, the accused could transfer money and escape. This allowed adequate time to escape even if the police in the north alerted their southern counterparts to act.

Mule accounts make things complicated as these have to be addressed through collaborative efforts involving the police in the north and the south and the banks whose accounts are being used, which takes time, allowing the accused to escape or take evasive action.

WITH THIS ISSUE
PACKING A PUNCH
PLUS 12 PAGES
MAGAZINE

EXPRESS READ

Was trolled over seating position: CJ

BENGALURU: CJI DY Chandrachud on Saturday recalled a recent incident of him facing 'trolling' for adjusting his seating position, during a hearing due to a discomfort and highlighted the need for judicial officers to manage stress. P3

CBSE: New books for Classes 3 and 6

NEW DELHI: The NCERT will release a new syllabus and textbooks for Classes 3 and 6, while there will be no change in the curriculum and textbooks for other grades for the academic year 2024-25 commencing from April 1, according to CBSE officials.

NUMBER CRUNCHING

Chennai link to data analysis in IPL

SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN @ Chennai

WHEN Gujarat Titans won the Indian Premier League (IPL) at the first time of asking in 2022, one person came in for special praise. Sandeep Raju, somebody who had played zero games for the franchise. But the role he played helped Hardik Pandya & Co. win the league. "I basically help the team with performance analytics," he had said in an in-house video the franchise uploaded. "I help them look at data and come up with performance and strategies and I also help with recruiting talent."

Of course, none of this is new. All sports teams — franchise, clubs, countries across a wide variety of sport — employ



Sunday Special

REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

data analysts to give them that extra one per cent. What, though, links Raju with most of the other analysts currently employed by various IPL teams is the city they call home? Chennai (or a place in Tamil Nadu). Mumbai Indians have in their ranks Varun Narasimhan. Rajasthan Royals have Krishnan Seshadri-nathan. Sunrisers Hyderabad have Gaurav Sundararaman.

Lakshmi Narayanan has been associated with Chennai Super Kings. Shrinivas Chandrasekaran (Lucknow Super Giants) and Sankar Rajagopal (former Punjab Kings, now with Jin) are other names.

Why is this the case? There are multiple reasons but the most common answer is that the two 'companies' that provide data analysts are headquartered in Chennai, both within a 10km radius (SportsMechanics and Kadamba). In a way, this is what's happening to the IPL teams. Because some teams still do not have separate data wings, what they essentially do is hire employees of these two companies for a fixed period every season. This year alone, there are at least seven Tamil-speaking analysts in IPL.

BIG TEAM PLAYERS

Even the Indian men's cricket team have on their roster somebody who is associated with Chennai-based company Sports Mechanics (Hari Mohan, who hails from Coimbatore). Seshadri-nathan was at StatDNA, Arsenal's analytics company when Arsene Wenger was the manager.

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